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Committee Assignments

Land Use & Planning (Chair)
Highways & Transportation
Higher Education
Commerce & Trade

Local transportation project to receive funding in Senate plan!

\$2 million is allocated for the Quincy Transload Facility.

This is an intermodal project that will allow produce to reach markets quicker and easier. It will also help relieve truck traffic on I-90, reducing congestion and making the highway safer.

The federal government has already committed federal loans for some of this project. This will not only help our district, it will help the statewide economy.

Studded snow tires

SB 5925 would place a \$15 fee on studded snow tires. This bill died in the Senate Rules Committee. But I will continue to keep fight against the proposal should it be revived or find its way into the transportation budget.

Sen. Joyce Mulliken's

UPDATE FROM OLYMPIA

4/11/03

Dear Friends,

With about two weeks left in the 2003 session there is still some heavy lifting to be done. While much has been accomplished, the serious negotiations and compromises with the House of Representatives have not yet begun in earnest.

I wrote to you last week to update you on the Senate Republican's budget proposal. Now, I'd like to update you on the transportation package, including the 5-cent gas tax increase proposal.

When the Senate set out to create a sensible solution to the various transportation problems around the state, we kept a few key factors in mind:

- If we're going to raise the gas tax, make it a modest raise;
- Make sure we build projects in **local areas**;
- Make sure we fund the projects through completion;
- When the projects are paid for, the gas tax increase should go away.

The 5-cent gas tax increase included in the Senate plan will amount to about 60 cents more per week for the average motorist – about the price of a can of soda.

The Senate transportation proposal takes the 36 counties *outside* King, Pierce and Snohomish counties and funds 100 percent of the safety and priority one projects. These are projects that provide congestion relief, have the permits – or can get them easily – are buildable now, and have "rights-of-way" issues already resolved.

The Senate plan also eliminates the number one inefficiency in transportation projects: the start-and-stop method that comes with spotty funding. When we spread the money all over the state to *start* projects but don't allocate enough to *finish* them (the peanut butter process), we shoot ourselves in the foot down the road because costs go up; permits expire; bond rates change; federal funding lapses; and design criteria change.

With our plan, there will be no more peanut butter! Projects that are to be funded will be funded through completion!

Less than half (11 cents) of the current 23-cent gas tax goes to state highway needs. In the Senate plan, 100 percent of the 5-cent gas tax increase will go to highway improvements.

Once these transportation improvements are paid for, the gas tax increase will go away. With bond rates at all-time lows, that 5-cents will buy more now than ever before.

Obviously, the final transportation package will come through negotiations with the House and Gov. Locke. I will keep you informed. Your input on both budgets – the general budget and the transportation budget – is critical. Best wishes!

joyce

Sen. Joyce Mulliken, 13th Legislative District